

politicians and constituents, it is vital for our institutions to be relevant to the communities we serve. When we engage the public by effectively using resources to educate and contribute to a better understanding of history and material culture, we will have succeeded in fulfilling our mission.

The Seminar for Historical Administration is the longest running and undoubtedly the best professional training course in historical administration available in the country. The course inspires change and leaves a lasting impact on all those who attend. Graduating from SHA is a great honor as well as an achievement that endorses contributions to the profession through excellence and leadership.

This year marks the Seminar's 40th anniversary, and festivities are planned for a reunion at Colonial Williamsburg on November 21, 1998. Alumni from throughout the United States and

Canada will be convening to share their commitment to SHA and the profession. Participate in the 1998 Seminar and come join us!

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For more information on the October 31-November 21, 1998, seminar, contact Peggy McDonald Howells at 757-220-7211. The Seminar is co-sponsored by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, the American Association for State and Local History, the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the American Association of Museums.

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Karen Stevens

## Building Project Records at Independence

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**H**ow can parks fulfill the NPS mandate to document, preserve, and protect building project records?

Parks engage in maintenance, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration activities during the normal course of managing park resources. Simple or complex, large or small, each project generates its own set of documentation with permanent value that requires curation by park personnel in accordance with NPS *Museum Handbook*, Part I and Part II, Appendix D (1996).

Parks may find some guidance in Special Directive 94-6, "Ensuring that Projects Generating Museum Collections Fund Cataloging and Basic Preservation." Formulated to address museum collections not covered by Special Directive 87-3, "Conservation of Archeological Resources" and Special Directive 91-4, "Ensuring that Natural Resource Projects Fund the Curation of Collections," the guidelines in 94-6 apply to other cultural resource projects such as building projects. The cultural resource management records produced by construction projects include drawings, reports, photographs, and correspondence in a variety of audio-visual, electronic and textual formats.

Independence National Historical Park is engaged in a multi-phased, multi-year project for the rehabilitation of park utilities and structures,

which will double the quantity of building project records archived since the establishment of the park. The volume, size and format of documentation generated by the program will strain the park's ability to pay the cost associated with storage, processing and cataloging.

Phase I of the Utility Improvement Project (UIP), is expected to span several years, and involves the replacement of utility systems in five structures on Independence Square—Independence Hall, Congress Hall, Old City Hall and the East and West Wings of Independence Hall. In addition, rehabilitation of the HVAC systems of many other park structures is expected to continue into the next decade.

In addition to rehabilitating the utility systems of park structures, the program will also address hazardous materials abatement, such as asbestos and lead paint. The park will take the opportunity to address accessibility issues, as required by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. And finally, as funding permits, the park hopes to develop and install new exhibits in several historic structures.

Independence NHP is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, First and Second Banks have been designated National Historic Landmarks and Independence Hall and Independence Square have been designated a World Heritage Site. The park is significant, not

only for the many historic events that occurred here, including the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, but also many park structures are architecturally significant.

The rehabilitation program undertaken by the UIP provides an opportunity to study and document park structures unequalled since the establishment of the park in 1948. The documentation meets the park's cultural resource management needs and will be of significant research value to the Service as well as other researchers. In accordance with Special Directive 94-6, park staff are responsible for developing strategies to ensure that project documentation is captured in a timely manner, funding for basic curation of these archival records is secured, and budgeting from operating base funds for the ongoing maintenance costs of curation is realized.

In the early stages of the UIP, Independence NHP adopted a proactive documentation strategy for the systematic transfer of project records created during the Design Development (Title I and II) phase for the Independence Square buildings. The park has hired a professional archivist who will ensure deposit of UIP documentation of permanent value in a secure location as soon as it is made available to the park as well as to curate these cultural resource management records.

Several thorny issues remain unresolved. The preliminary plan to transfer project documents to the archives via a distribution list broke down forcing the archivist to rely on the good will of DSC and INDE staff to send records to the archives and to provide her with information on recent documentation availability.

Working with DSC staff managing the UIP, the park compiled lists of formats and quantity of

records produced for each component of the project completed or in process. Once the park identified a list of project records that staff wanted for permanent retention in the archives as museum collections, costs for storing, processing, cataloging and ongoing maintenance were computed. The figures were sobering.

It became very clear that the park must take steps to act on the guidelines in Special Directive 94-6 in order to fulfill its responsibilities to document, preserve and protect the UIP records scheduled for permanent retention in the archives. First, INDE needs to reevaluate the list of UIP records for permanent retention to define what staff really wants to deposit in the archives, keeping in mind the program needs of the Maintenance Division and Historic Architect Branch.

Second, the park must devise a building records management plan that can be written into task orders, contracts and agreements during the project planning process. Finally, park staff must ensure that included in the UIP project budget are line items for curation of cultural resources documentation that become museum collections in the archives.

The park has developed the resources to pursue this proactive strategy and support ongoing maintenance of archival collections: the archivist is responsible for curating building project records and the UIP project includes plans for a new library/archives facility in the Merchants Exchange Building rehabilitation. INDE is committed to the National Park Service's mission of preserving, protecting and interpreting cultural resources.

*Karen Stevens is the supervisory archivist at Independence National Historical Park.*



### ***Guide to African-American Historic Places***

*African American Historic Places* describes more than 800 properties nationwide listed in the National Register of Historic Places for their significance in African-American history. Also included are eight articles on the African-American experience and study and five geographic and thematic indexes which enhance the book's value as a reference for everyone interested in African-American history. Edited by Beth L. Savage, an architectural historian with the National Register, the 623-page book may be ordered from John Wiley & Sons, Inc. at 1-800-225-5945. ISBN 471-143456. The price is \$25.95.